

Neal Smith *National Wildlife Refuge*



Special Events



Monarch Madness

Saturday, September 12

9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

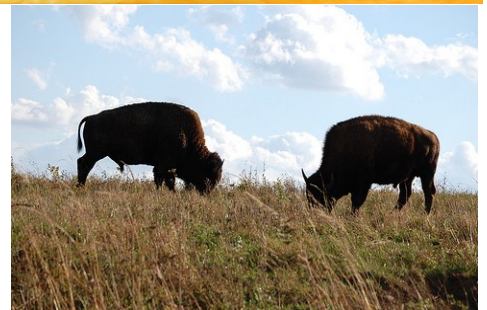
Calling citizen scientists of all ages! Neal Smith NWR is looking for volunteers to assist refuge staff in capturing, tagging, and releasing monarch butterflies! Tagging monarchs will help scientists learn more about their fascinating migration. **Pre-registration is required** and limited to the **first 100** participants. Contact Brianna at 515-994-3400 or email brianna_patrick@fws.gov

National Public Lands Day

Saturday, September 26

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

National Public Lands Day (NPLD) is the nation's largest, single-day volunteer effort for public lands. Last year, over 175,000 volunteers celebrated across the country. Join us for a chance to volunteer & create native tallgrass prairie at Neal Smith. **Pre-registration required**, contact Megan at 515-994-3400 or megan_wandag@fws.gov



Ding Darling Day

Saturday, October 10

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

In honor of Iowan J.N. "Ding" Darling, a pioneer conservationist, the refuge is hosting stewardship opportunities for you and/or your group. From collecting seeds to removing invasive plants, everyone will have a chance to help restore prairie habitat at Neal Smith NWR. FREE lunch provided by the Friends of Neal Smith NWR. **Pre-registration is required.**



For more information: (515) 994-3400 http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Neal_Smith/

Program & Activity Guide

Naturalist Programs

Nature Tots

Children ages 3-5 are invited to bring their favorite adult and join us as we read stories, go outside, make nature crafts, and much more! **Registration is encouraged.**

Date	Time	Age	Topic
September 5	10:30 am - 11:30 am	3 - 5 yrs.	Magnificent Monarchs
October 3	10:30 am - 11:30 am	3 - 5 yrs.	Lovely Leaves
November 7	10:30 am - 11:30 am	3 - 5 yrs.	Winter Sleepers

2 Simple Ways to Register!

1. Phone:

Call 515-994-3400

2. Email:

Megan_Wandag@fws.gov

Family Fun Hikes

A ranger leads visitors of all ages on a nature hike to discover the many wonders of Neal Smith's amazing prairie habitat. **Pre-registration encouraged.**
Contact Brianna Patrick at brianna_patrick@fws.gov

Date	Time	Age	Topic
October 25	2:00 pm—3:00 pm	All	The Power of Seeds
November 15	2:00 pm—3:00 pm	All	Winter On the Way



Fall Photo Hike

Saturday, Oct. 17

8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Photographers of all ages and skill levels are invited to join a Ranger, who will introduce subjects on the fall prairie and lead a walk to several new photo locations. Bring your own camera. **Please pre-register.**

Volunteer Opportunities

Second Saturday Stewardship

Interested in giving back to the environment? Stewardship volunteer programs occur on the 2nd Saturday of each month at the Refuge. All ages welcome!

To register, contact **Megan Wandag** at Megan_Wandag@fws.gov or 515-994-3400.

Date	Time
September 12	9:00 am—12:00 pm
October 10	9:00 am—12:00 pm
November 14	9:00 am—12:00 pm

DON'T FORGET!

Bring a reusable water bottle!



For more information: (515) 994-3400 http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Neal_Smith/

Self-Guided

Return to Wildness Movie

15 minutes

Film presentation about Neal Smith NWR is shown every hour on the half hour, or upon request. No group is too small!

The Visitor Center is open every day with the exception of some federal holidays. Closed all federal holidays except Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day. Visitor Center hours are 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Monday - Saturday, and 12 p.m. - 5p.m. on Sundays. Trails and Auto Tour are open daily from dawn to dusk.

COME VISIT!

Outdoor Scavenger Hunts

How many birds do you see?
Can you identify prairie insects? Borrow a copy of seasonal ID sheets at the front desk of the Visitor Center to use while you hike.

Hiking Trails

Take a hike through the beautiful tallgrass prairie or oak savanna. Try to catch a glimpse of birds, bison, or diverse insects. Brochures and maps available at the Visitor Center.



Trail	Length	Surface	Habitat
Overlook Trail	1/2 mile	Paved— Accessible	Tallgrass Prairie
Tallgrass Trail	2 miles	Paved	Tallgrass Prairie
Oak Savanna Trail	1/2 mile	Gravel	Oak Savanna
Basswood Trail	1/2 mile	Grass	Woodland

Prairie Learning Center Exhibits

Come explore the interactive exhibits at the Visitor Center! Exhibits include an underground maze, videos, drawing table, explorer sheets, puppet theatre, and exploratory bison room.



LET'S CRUISE

Enjoy the Refuge from the comfort of your vehicle on the 4 mile Auto Tour. This is the best way to see bison & elk. Check out a narrated interpretive CD of the route for FREE at the Visitor Center.

Photo Hike Exhibit Opening
Saturday, November 7, 1:00 - 3:00pm

Images from photo hike participants will be displayed in the Refuge art gallery throughout November.



All programs are FREE & open to the public!

Fall Exploration Ideas

1. Go on a Seed Hunt!

Prairie seeds come in all different shapes and sizes. Can you find any that are fuzzy, sticky, sharp, soft, tiny or huge?

2. Search For Color!

At first glimpse, the prairie may appear to be a blanket of gold. But if you take a closer look, hues of blue, purple, green, and brown will be revealed.

3. Take a Binocular Hike!

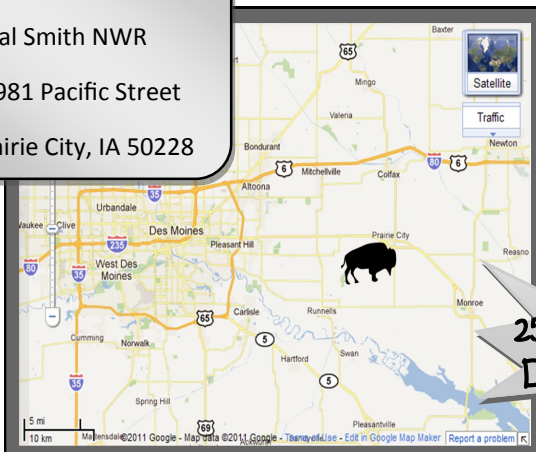
During the fall season, a variety of birds visit the refuge. Look for short eared owls and northern harriers flying overhead and sparrows and longspurs hidden in the grasses. Binoculars are available for loan.

4. Catch a Sunrise or Sunset!

With days getting shorter, it is easier to visit the refuge right at dawn or dusk. These are the most beautiful and busy times of day on the prairie. Cotton candy skies are the backdrop for a busy show of animal activity.

Street Address

Neal Smith NWR
9981 Pacific Street
Prairie City, IA 50228



25 miles from
Des Moines!



LET'S EXPLORE

Come explore the natural wonders Neal Smith NWR has to offer! Check out binoculars or an "Explorers Backpack" for free at the Visitor Center during normal business hours.

Did you know....

Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), one of the most common prairie grasses, is also called "turkey foot"? Its three racemes, or flowering parts, resemble the foot of a turkey!

CONSTRUCTION ON THE REFUGE!

During the fall of 2015, we will add bike lines and repave our entry road (Pacific St.). This construction will result in periodic closures.

From the west on Hwy 163: At about mile marker 16, turn right on W 129th St. S. It is just past a few large grain bins. There is a small detour sign near the intersection. Proceed about 3 miles south, and turn left on 102nd Ave. Follow to a T-intersection, and turn left. You will then enter our parking lot.

From the east on Hwy 163: Go PAST exit 18 (Prairie City), where the brown highway signs indicate you would normally exit. Go about 2 miles, and turn left on W 129th St. S, just before a few large grain bins. Follow the directions above.

